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THE

CATHOLIC WEEKLY INSTRUCTOR;

Or, Miscellany of

RELIGIOUS, INSTRUCTIVE, AND ENTERTAINING KNOWLEDGE.

No. 31.—Vol. II. Saturday, August 2, 1845. { Price 1*d.* or, Stamped, 2*d.*

LETTERS FROM BELGIUM.

Continued from page 304.

LETTER X.

On passing through a town or village in England, have you never felt an undefinable sadness, while looking at a group of children at play, or at the peasantry pursuing their labours in the fields, or the mechanic toiling in his workshop, from reflecting that perhaps they had no one who cared for them, whether their immortal souls should be happy or miserable, when their short race here should be run to the end? No one to sympathise with their sorrows, or to direct their joyous hours to pious recreation? I remember this feeling frequently saddened any little excursion I made into strange places, where I did not know whether the place I passed through possessed a fervent or a careless pastor. In a Catholic land, such as is Belgium, every nest of cottages seems to smile upon the traveller, and every group of merry children commands our joyful sympathy in its loud laugh and its giddy romp, because we are conscious of a protecting power which is hovering unseen around them, caring for their happiness, and providing for their safety. This habit of seeing all mankind under a laughing aspect in a Catholic land, is acquired in a great degree, from the consciousness one has of the power of Intercession—we know that they are prayed for. It is consoling, so consoling, this boon of Christ, *by* his beloved Church, amidst His many consolations. To think that all are prayed for. Even if they neglect many religious advantages, yet from this they cannot escape—they are prayed for—systematically prayed for.

For this great blessing the Church has largely provided, and with a little attention I hope to show you, that in the immense importance she attaches to intercessory prayer she acts in the spirit of divine guidance.

In reading the scriptures you cannot fail to notice, that intercession is appointed of God, and how acceptable it is to Him, so much so, as to be indeed indispensable. I will call to your memory a few instances.

Abraham was specially permitted by God to be an intercessor. Sodom and Gomorrah were promised pardon through his intercession, could only ten righteous have been found therein. The whole account is a beautiful display of divine condescension in permitting Himself to be entreated by one clothed in human nature like ourselves.

God's demand of intercession is still more distinctly seen in the account of Abimelech. God Himself appoints Abraham to the office of an intercessor for Abimelech. Abimelech appears to have been singularly favoured by God. The almighty condescended to withhold him from sin in an especial manner, by visiting him in a vision, and warning him of his danger with Abraham's wife. Abimelech pleads his innocence as being ignorant she was the wife of another: "Did not he say to me she is my sister, and she say he is my brother, in the simplicity of my heart and cleanness of my hands have I done this." This plea of innocence God accepts in the beautifully condescending answer: "I know that thou didst it with a sincere heart, and therefore I withheld thee from sinning against me, and I suffered thee not to touch her. Now, therefore, restore the man his wife."—Mark the necessity of intercession, well-pleasing as Abimelech seems to have been to God, preserved even by His special interference from committing a sin, his plea of innocence accepted, one would think he might have presumed upon the unconditional pardon of the Almighty. No, God attached thereunto a condition, Abraham must intercede for it. "Now, therefore, restore the man his wife, for he is a prophet, and he shall plead for thee, and thou shalt live." And it is remarkable, that not the generous restitution to Abraham of his wife, with the compensatory gifts of "sheep, and oxen, and servants, and handmaids," procured the reversion of the sentence which had gone out against Abimelech's house, for we are especially reminded again, that it was "*when* Abraham prayed" that "God healed them."

I need but hint of Moses the great and prevailing intercessor between the Israelites and their God. His name alone brings before the memory

the many times he "*stood between*" them and the anger of their offended Creator.

The power of intercession is sometimes represented as almost irresistible with God. The Almighty Judge seems to indicate, that when he would do "his work, his strange work," and "bring to pass his act, his strange act," that of punishing, he must "harden his heart that he will not hear" the voice of an intercessor, "Though Noah, Daniel, and Job stood before me."

The Gospel dispensation is one grand scheme of intercession, having Jesus Christ the righteous as Mediator.

The greatest stress is laid by Him also on the duty of intercession on our part. By precept—the disciples could not cast out the evil spirit, because they had failed to intercede for their patient; "this kind can go out by nothing but by prayer and fasting." By example—he assures Peter he has "prayed for him that his faith fail not." In curing the deaf and dumb, "looking up to heaven he groaned and said to him, be thou opened." On the cross—"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

That the early church so interpreted the will of Christ, we have abundant proof in the writings of the Apostles. (Acts xiv. 22.) "And when they had ordained to them priests in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they believed." They interceded with God for them. We see in the account of Peter's imprisonment by Herod, what was the custom of the church, namely, to intercede for each other: "Peter was kept in prison, but prayer was made *without ceasing*, by the Church unto God for him." God showed his approval of this intercession, and answered by sending his angel to deliver Peter. St. Paul follows out the intention of Christ, and constantly intercedes for the brethren, assuring us of this in his own energetic manner: "God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the Gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make commendation of you." But enough of examples, I am sure you will not doubt that the Catholic church "serves God in spirit, in the Gospel of his Son," when I show you how largely she has provided for the supply of intercessory prayer, and that there is incalculable advantage in being a Catholic, were it for this one mercy only—*the being constantly prayed for.*

Various are the means she takes to link and bind us together in one great bond of charitable intercession for each other. One constant supply of this heaven-sent aliment, is provided by means of the priesthood. I wish I could convey to you the gentle, holy countenance, and angelic manner with which a young Catholic lady once said to me: "Our priests are always praying for us." Her earnest intention was not lost; no learned, lengthened, controversial discussion could have weighed with me, or shown me the advantage of becoming a Catholic, as that one gentle hint weighed with me. May heaven bless her for it, and her lovely infant, whom she is training for his glory. Yes, our priests are always praying for us.

Every priest has obligation laid upon him to recite a form of devotion daily. I have before mentioned this, and told you of what it consists, and that it is called "The Office." The book containing it you have heard of under the name of the Breviary, so called from its being a brief, or short method of reciting the scriptures, from which selections are herein made, intermixed with prayers and hymns for daily use. The arrangement is surpassingly noble and elevated, and its beautiful changes and variations to suit every circumstance the Church wishes to celebrate, quite beyond any one's imagining from being acquainted with any other form of devotion. No priest whatever is exempted from the obligation to recite his Office. His Holiness the Pope, with his sacred college, the Catholic archbishops and bishops, throughout the whole world, the monastic orders, with all the Catholic clergy of every land, diocese, and parish, all and every one must by strictest obligation daily recite his Office. They never dare omit it for any thing, nor under any circumstances, except extreme illness, when they are really so ill as to be unable to say it. This devotion occupies each about two hours of every day, and is strictly a devotion of intercession for the Church. None may apply it to private use, a share only may be applied to his private benefit, and a share only to any particular end towards which he may wish to pray. He must form his primary intention for the Church, and propose to himself as his primary intention to pray for her. The clergy thus forming one great army of supplicants, who kneel daily before the eternal throne of God for *us*, to *pray for us.* Try to call before your imagination the immense treasure of prayer ascending hourly before the Majesty of Heaven. Think how each member of every community or parish is provided with intercessory prayer in this daily duty of its appointed pastor, each necessarily in praying for the Church wafting some of the sweetest perfumes of his incense for those members of the Church committed to his care. "Our priests are always praying for us."

Another great means of the Church for supplying intercessory prayer is, by forming her children into brotherhoods or societies. These are very numerous, and we may choose to which we will

belong, according to our devotion. Every parish has one or more of these societies established in it, of which most of the inhabitants are members. We may also belong to societies of other parishes, each having privileges of its own, which we may like to partake of. We have in our small village three of these societies, and few of us there are who do not belong to them all. The conditions of being members vary, but all oblige in some way to intercessory prayer, and bring us the advantage of having masses said for us on appointed days with benediction services, besides the being prayed for daily by the whole society. The prayers we have to recite are prescribed by the rules of the society. We are expected to be faithful in performing these devotions, and thus render ourselves partakers of the supplication of thousands, and become ourselves the dispensers of good to them.

In our daily attendance at the great sacrifice of the mass, we become of necessity intercessors and are interceded for. But I may not enter now on the incalculable privileges we enjoy ourselves and dispense to others through intercession in that sacred service, it would be too long.

Thus nurtured in the duty of interceding for each other, Catholics practise it as naturally as they take their daily bread.

In our colleges the young students have many rules by which they form themselves into intercessors for the whole college, or turn the whole college into intercessors for one member. For instance, they draw lots once a month, and for him whose number is lowest, the whole college receives the holy sacrament and hears mass.

A Catholic, in parting from a friend, or writing to one, asks his prayers. A confessor asks the prayers of his penitent, and requests his penitent's prayers for himself.

The request for intercessory prayer is universal. Go into a shop in a strange town, and say you are in a hurry because on your way to hear mass, the person who serves you will earnestly say, "May I recommend myself to your prayers?" The beggar you relieve at your door, or in the street, kneels down and says a Lord's prayer for you. Give to the poor, their grateful reply is, "I will hear mass for you." Tell them you are sick or in sorrow, the ready consolation is, "I will pray for you."

I am sure you must see the loveliness of this strong bond of charity, and must acknowledge that the appointment of intercession must be of God, and an additional proof of his mercy to us helpless creatures.

But I have only yet shown you the least part of our treasure of intercessory prayer. The prayers of the church militant are truly a rich store of heaven-given blessings; but there is another branch of the Church in whose prayers we participate, and in which the mercy of God is still more largely shown. You do not doubt that the church triumphant prays for us; your church teaches you this by the mouth of her doctors, bishops, and divines. I need not multiply quotations to prove this, your own reading will readily supply you with their faith on this matter, one example shall suffice. "Though we know little of the occupations of the blessed in heaven, this one thing we know, even that they pray." (Jeremy Taylor.) I know that thus far you give me the right hand of fellowship; you have no objection to "come" with me "to mount Sion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the company of many thousands of angels, and to the church of the first-born who are written in the heavens, and to the spirits of the just made perfect," (Heb. xii. 22, 23.) and to believe with me that through the merciful appointment of God, he permits them to be occupied for our good, to unite with Him in loving us, and to "succour and defend us on earth." (Collect from Common Prayer for St. Michael and all Angels.) Your church teaches you to go farther, and puts words into your mouth by which you may *ask God* to grant you this succour and this defence, in this same collect. "O everlasting God, who hast ordained and constituted the services of angels and men in a wonderful manner; mercifully grant, that as thy holy angels alway do thee service in heaven, so by thy appointment they may succour and defend us on earth." Thus far, then, we go hand in hand, but here our path must divide. You will, with me, ask God to grant you the assistance of His holy ones, but you would not with me ask a spirit dwelling in His presence to assist you by His permission. That is to say, you would not direct your words to any created being which is unseen, because you have been taught that all such direct communication is idolatry.

And what course of reasoning shall I follow, to show you that you are mistaken in supposing such communion as the Church allows with saints and angels is idolatry? All I shall write on this matter will, I fear, only end in your believing me weak in intellect on this point, and deserving your pity, and in your congratulating yourself on not having been led astray to follow practices so contrary to the express word of God, giving the "honour" of "a jealous God unto another."

Yet may we not be allowed to pity in our turn the "blindness in part" which "has happened to England," and which veils from her the truth, that generations have passed away, each in its turn containing its men of high intellect, sound re-

flection, and genius, which Protestants equally with ourselves still venerate, that these all lived and died in the same belief as ourselves, and in following the same practices as we are following? That at the present day the Catholic world boasts its men of giant intellect, whose judgment on any subject is confidently taken, and who are believed capable of standing in competition with men of first-rate talent and education. These all hold the same opinions and follow the same practices which Protestant England persists in calling idolatrous. Do these highly-gifted and reasoning men then, not know what is meant by idolatry? or the plain meaning of the words so much retorted against them, "I am a jealous God, and I will not give mine honour to another?" Would there not be something like the humility which the apostle recomends, and obedience to Him whose precept is to "judge not," if Protestant England just admitted that she might be mistaken, that there might be something to be explained of our practices, which would allow of a different interpretation to that which she gives them? If she were just to ask herself whether the great men of former ages, or those of later days were "good men and true," when they, one and all, though holding the same doctrine, and following the same practices regarding the honour and invocation of saints, repeatedly declared and declare they are not idolaters, nor give the honour to another, which is due to God alone? That their practices admit of an explanation different to that which Protestants give? That they understand their own religion, and its interpretation and teaching better than any who are strangers to it can do? In other circumstances a person of sound mind is allowed to know what he does, or what he does not, and a true man is believed when he says he does, or does not such and such things. A member of one of the universities, for example, would be allowed to know the meaning of a lecturer on any given subject, geology for instance, whose course of lectures he had attended, to be able to give you a just analysis of the course, and to show you how the explanation of the lecturer on the subject, set aside the danger of believing his theory to be correct, though, to one who had not attended this train of reasoning it might appear dangerous, and subversive of scripture. Knowing this university member to be a man of truth, you would believe he related exactly to you the explanation of the lecturer, and that in following out this theory he continued to be a true Christian, and would believe him, when he assured you the lecturer's train of reasoning increased his faith in the truth of God's holy word, instead of diminishing it.

In my own case—Suppose I were a Protestant living in India instead of a Catholic living in Belgium, you would think me capable of judging sufficiently of the result of your missionaries' labours in the locality in which I was placed, to give an opinion upon them. I mean simply in the confidence which one friend has with another of ordinary capacity, supposing her to be of sound mind. You would trust in the correctness of the information I should give you, if I told you I had much opportunity of watching the habits and feelings of the native Hindoos. That among those who were converted to Christianity I found great intelligence, and through the teaching they received they became quite capable of judging between the true worship of the true God, and the false worship of their false gods. That of one in particular, my servant, for example, I had constant opportunity of judging of the clear perception he had between the adoration of God and his former idolatry towards the images of his false gods. That I was fully convinced that while kneeling in the Protestant church he profoundly adored the unseen God, and would shudder at the thought of offering any semblance of adoration to the two cherubims carved above the communion table, though he seemed to kneel before them and cast his eyes upon them in the same manner as I had seen him do while kneeling on the steps of his heathen temple. I do not think you would doubt the veracity of my assertion, nor believe that I would vouch so positively for any thing I did not know to be really true. You would believe I knew the workings of a mind, with which I was in daily contact, sufficiently to give evidence regarding the correctness of its faith.

Yet now the case is of Belgian Catholics instead of Indian idolaters, you will doubt my capability of giving an opinion, and will believe me deficient in the power of judging the workings of mind of those with whom I live, and with whom I am in constant intercourse. Nay, more, if I place my own mind before you, and declare to you that having been myself taught by the same teaching as Catholic Belgians have been taught, I have a clear perception, as they also have, of the distinction between the adoration given to God alone, and the honour and reverence paid to those whom He has created, and whom I am taught to honour for His sake, because they are "right dear" to Him. When I declare this to you, you will doubt of my capability of judging of my own heart, of my own ideas, in this matter.

Let us examine whence this mistake on the part of Protestants can arise. Whence have they derived this false notion of the practices of Catholics in regard to God's holy ones?

Originally, from men interested to deceive

them. I cannot enter now on historical evidence; I hope to do this at large with you in a continued series of letters on early English Church History, at present I must leave it to your candour to believe me or not, when I tell you, that the origin of England's schism with Rome, and her final apostacy, were by no means caused by the honour the Church paid to saints. On the contrary, this was not thought of, being brought forward as a pretence against her, till the Duke of Somerset, the Protector, during the reign of young Edward VI. found it necessary to produce something which should work strongly in the minds of the people, the lower orders, the mass, whom, to further his ambitious schemes, it was necessary to incite violently against the religion to which they were still too much attached. The war-cry of idolatry was one they could understand, and their good priests being silenced, to whom they would have listened, they fell by degrees into the snare—not all at once, for it required the persecuting laws of Elizabeth to exterminate their veneration for those who were worthy to be companions of Christ in his kingdom, those who, where He is, there are they also. John xiv. 3. But I must forbear to enter on historical evidence here; when I do, I shall have ample opportunity of showing you that, it was not from any horror of idolatry conceived by England's sainted soil, that her children left the "good and useful practice" (Council of Trent) of invoking the saints, but by cruel laws rigidly enforced, which drove their religion from them.

Another cause of Protestants mistaking Catholic practices, and continuing to mistake them, is, that they seldom read any works but those composed by Protestant authors, who blindly follow the false ideas given by the original inventors of the falsehoods. Those who shake off the prejudices of education, and venture to read historical, devotional, or controversial works, written by Catholics, have the same, or very nearly the same, ideas as we have ourselves of the veneration due to saints.

There is still another cause of our practices being mistaken, which weighs with many who desire to think well of us, and would gladly lay aside their prejudices against us. Even to those who are converted to our faith it produces much difficulty in their early days of conversion. This cause lies in the reverence paid to saints having been so entirely laid aside, that all communion of feeling is lost with any being *unseen,* except Deity. I would wish to impress this strongly on your mind. It would remove many difficulties if you could see this clearly. You are accustomed to think only of worship, of *adoration,* when your thoughts turn to an unseen being, because you have been accustomed to think only of God. We are accustomed to think of God as surrounded by his heavenly court, of God who sitteth upon the throne, and of "the great multitude which no man" can "number," "standing before the throne;" and when we speak to God in Heaven, we speak as St. Paul was accustomed to do, "before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels." (1 Timothy v. 21.) We thus bring the unseen world before us, we think of those with Him in glory, of those who, now saints, once dwelt on this earth, human beings like ourselves. Our minds and affections become familiarized to these ideas. Hence we learn to think of unseen beings allied to ourselves. Our ideas of unseen beings thus become lowered. We learn to think of Deity as unseen, and we learn to think of human beings as unseen. We hence learn to think of each distinctly, to feel distinctly towards each. Thus even should we use the same words in addressing the one as in addressing the other, there could be no approach of sentiment in the address we should make to the one, and in the address we should make to the other. In the same manner as there would be no approach of sentiment in two declarations I might make to you in this letter—the one, I love God—the other, I love my mother.

Another cause of mistake arises from carelessness in examining our faith on the subject of invocation of the saints. But I will assist you to be more just, and to consider the matter carefully, by asking you one serious question. Do you carry your opinion of our stupidity so far as to suppose we believe the saints possess the powers attributable to Deity alone? namely, Omnipresence, and Omniscience?—Do you really suppose we believe saints and angels to be Omnipresent and Omniscient? Reflect a little on this. Do you really suppose we believe St. Paul, or St. Thomas à Becket to be everywhere present, and to know our interior thoughts in their created nature?

And if we believe these powers to belong to God alone, then does it not necessarily follow, that we believe, that all which the saints know of our thoughts and prayers, they know only as God communicates these to them? That "*God causes* the saints and angels to know what we have need of, and the honour we pay them, and" that "they see it in the Divine Nature *only?*" And are not these the very words or our children's first catechism? And are they not taught them from their priests' lips among the first principles of their religious education? And can children thus taught acquire the false notions of the saints' power and ubiquity which Protestants attribute to them? Do they not acquire the habit of addressing saints only through God, and of believing that the saints

help them by their prayers only as far as the Almighty sees fit to allow them this help? And must not God be *really* and *veritably* the Being they address, while the form of their words speaks to his servants? And when in moments of desolation, they call upon a saint to pray for them, is it not God's own voice for which they listen in answer, encouraging them as Abimelech was encouraged in the gracious promise, "Abraham shall pray for you?" And when they receive an answer to their prayers through the intercession of His saints, is it not God they thank, and to whom they give the glory, for having appointed them such "a city of refuge" as the prayers of the saints?

If you could but lay aside the terrifying spectre of idolatry, which wicked men have conjured, you would see how manifold are the advantages of this doctrine of the church, and among them the beautiful reverence excited towards our gracious God, in this invocation of saints. I have shown you that it is the almighty God Himself who is applied to; the reverence due to his awful Majesty demands sometimes the distant manner of approaching Him appointed by our church. And is this indirect manner of approaching a superior quite unknown to you? You, who are so familiar with the polished language of Italy, must have suggested to yourself how close a resemblance the Catholic's reverent manner of addressing God through His saints, bears to the Italian custom of speaking to a superior, or to any one to whom it is wished to show respect, in the third person. "Queste circostanze debbono procurarmi *da Lei* un perdone." This phrase will recall to your mind the feeling of respect which this elegant form of address conveys, and perhaps aid in procuring "*da Lei un perdone*" for the Catholic's much calumniated form of words—"Holy Mary, pray for us."

(To be continued.)

A SECRET WORTH KNOWING.

THE acts that have had in the end the most important influence over our life, do not appear, at the time they take place, of a different texture to all the other acts that fill up the rest of our days and years. We understand the full meaning of nothing that we do, until it is over; and when the husk which shrouds the present monent from us is burst by the event, then, and not till then, we become conscious of what it is we have already done. * * * All things in daily life work to a smooth surface. Even the most calamitous and startling events do not fall on us and crush us suddenly, but drop by moment's fall; and each moment has a natural connexion with the one that went before; and each as it comes finds its place beside us and around us, taking its shape gradually; it is not till all is over that we see the event moulded to its full proportion, standing out from the web of the day or year, though at first it looked no different from the common stuff of time. And *this* is the grand difficulty of life; we know not what we do whilst it is being done, and therefore it behoves us, in this dimness of uncertainty, to be sure of ourselves at least; to live each moment sincerely—so that, whatever the result may be, we at least can be at one with ourselves.—*Zoe; by Miss Jewsburg.*

ELECTRICITY AND AGRICULTURE.

AT the Royal Institution last week, the Rev. G. Sidney read a paper in which the following six propositions were maintained:—First, *Electricity appears to exercise an influence on growing plants.* After noticing the experiments of Maimbray, Nollet, Bertholon, Davy, and others, Mr. Sidney mentioned that he had himself accelerated the growth of a hyacinth in the common glass jar, by giving it sparks, on alternate days, from the machine. Secondly, *Fluids contained in vegetable tissues possess a high conducting energy, as compared with the ordinary substances found on the earth's surface.* In confirmation of this, several experiments were shown to prove the conducting energy of vegetable points. The fact was also stated, that it was impossible to give an electric shock to more than one at each extremity of a circle of persons standing on a *grass-plot.* This the operator easily did when they transferred themselves to a *gravel-walk.* Thirdly, *There are indications of adaptation to electrical influences in the differences of form of parts of plants in the different stages of their development.* Thus the moistened germ of a vegetating seed becomes a good conductor. The ascending and descending portions are, in the majority of instances, pointed. Plants designed for a rapid growth have generally a strong pubescence. Those destined to meet the variations of the seasons have often thorns or prickles. As surface becomes needed for other purposes, the pointed is changed to the expansive form of the vegetable organ. As the period of fruiting approaches, it seems desirable that electricity should be carried off. Hence the hairs, &c. fall off or die away. The apparent exception is that of *pappi*, which have a special office for conveyance of seeds. Gardeners put metallic hoops over fruiting melons, which tend to take off electricity and shade them. Fourthly, Mr. Sidney inquired *Whether there are not natural phenomena tending to confirm these views?* Vine sand hops are said to grow rapidly during and after a thunder storm, and peas to pod after a tempest. Again it is observed, that there are no plants wherever simooms, which appear to result from a highly electrical state of the atmosphere, occur. Fifthly, Mr. Sidney suggested the inquiry, *Whether the forms and geographical distribution of certain species of plants did not indicate design with reference to their electrical properties and uses?* The prevalence of the fir tribes in high latitudes was noted. These trees are characterised by their needle-shaped foliage, and it was argued that the conducting power, with which this form invested them, might modify dryness and cold, and aid in the precipitation of snow. Mr. Sidney concluded by suggesting *modes of applying electricity to practical agriculture and horticulture.* First, *with regard to the free electricity in the atmosphere.* Having mentioned the experiments of Mr. Foster, of Findrassie, on growing crops, Mr. Sidney described modifications of this arrangement made by Professor E. Solly, in his experiments at the Horticultural Garden, and by himself. The latter consist of wires suspended over the growing crop from other wires, which are kept parallel to the horizon by being fastened to insulated rods. Secondly, *Electricity artificially generated by the voltaic pile.* Mr. Sidney has found that potatoes, mustard and cress, cinerarias, fuchsias, and other plants, have their development, and, in some instances, their productiveness, increased by being made to grow between a copper and a zinc plate connected by a conducting wire; while, on the other hand, geraniums and balsams are destroyed by the same influence. Mr. Sidney at present believes that the application of electricity to vegetable growth may be made available in horticulture. The question as to agriculture may be decided when more experiments are tried, and the philosophy of the experiments fully determined.—*Athenæum.*

THE modern philosopher on the edge of the grave thinks himself between two states of nonentity: he is deceived, one is full of his deeds, the other of what they have deserved.

It is lawful to take revenge only by kindnesses.

TESTIMONY OF THOSE OUT OF THE CHURCH.

No. 4.

PURITY OF THE CHURCH OF ROME DURING THE FIRST SIX CENTURIES.

It is somewhat amusing to see how puzzled and perplexed our opponents are, in trying to point out the time when, and the place where, the church of Rome fell from that purity, which they acknowledge her to have possessed in the early ages. Some of the Anglicans, especially of the Oxford school, are great admirers of that terse maxim of St. Vincent of Lerins: "Quod semper, quod ubi que, quod ab omnibus traditum est." The question then arises for the Anglican divines, if the maxim "quod semper," &c. is to be acted upon and carried out, at what precise point the investigation is to stop. Is it at the close of the second, third, fourth, or fifth centuries? "Stand by the first six General Councils," exclaims Hammond and Stillingfleet. "Stop at the end of the fifth century," says Archbishop Bramhall. "You must not draw bridle till the disunion of the East and West," cries bishop Ken. "You are wrong," says archbishop Usher, "four or five hundred years are sufficient." "Rather three or four," says Waterland and Beveridge. "The precise limit is no where," says Mr. Newman; "it is a question of degree and place." "It is every where," says in emphatic tone the consistent Catholic. But a truce to these discordant declaimers. Let us now come to some quiet and substantial authorities on this important point. There are few calm writers and men of sound learning but admit the purity of the church of Rome during the first ages of the Christian era; indeed the fact has been so repeatedly acknowledged by Protestant divines, as to have become tantamount to a first principle.

1. Whitaker, On Antichrist, p. 31, writes: "During the first five hundred years, the church was *pure*, and inviolably taught the faith delivered by the apostles."

2. Jewell (than who, by-the-bye, no one ever penned more falsehoods in so small a compass), in his answer to Harding, p. 246, says: "St. Augustine and the other godly fathers rightly yielded reverence to the see of Rome, for the purity of religion there preserved a long time without spot. The godly fathers of those times seeking to the church of Rome, then, for purity of religion most famous above all others."

3. Fulke, Confutation of Purgatory, p. 373, says: "The early fathers do specially name the church of Rome at that time (meaning the first six hundred years). Because, as it was founded by the apostles, so it hath continued in the doctrine of the apostles."

4. Morton, Catholic Appeal, p. 354, makes the following acknowledgment: "It has been the common profession of Protestants to stand to the judgment of antiquity for the first four hundred years and more in *all* things: nay, we give the Romanists the scope of the first five hundred or six hundred years, as they themselves acknowledge."

5. The next authority, that we will adduce, is that of the learned Usher. It is found in connexion with an ancient and curious synodical decree of St. Patrick from the Vetus Codex Ecclesiæ Armachanæ. But first to state the decree, and then Usher's remarks thereon: "If any questions arise in this island, that is, any difficult cause unknown to the Scottish nations, let it be referred to the see of the Irish archbishop Patrick, and to his examination. But if the matter can be decided neither by him nor his council, we have decreed, that it shall be referred to the apostolic see, that is, to the chair of the apostle St. Peter, holding the authority of the city of Rome." See now how Usher deals with this awkward document, not denying it, but endeavouring to get rid of it as best he can. "It is most likely," says he, "that St. Patrick had a special regard for the church of Rome, from *whence he was sent*, for the conversion of this Island; so, had I lived in his days, I should have as willingly listened to the judgment of the church of Rome, as to the determination of any other church in the whole world, so reverend an estimation have I of the integrity of that church in those good days." So archbishop Usher. Religion of the Ancient Irish, p. 87.

6. Here we have to thank Usher for bringing down the integrity or purity of the Roman Catholic Church to the close of the fifth century. The question then naturally presents itself, what religion did Rome hold at that period, was Patrick a protestant or a papist? We have a good authority for an answer to this question, no less than the centuriators, or century writers, of Magdeburg. We need hardly remark that the centuriators were certain learned Germans of the city of Magdeburg, who in the early days of the Reformation composed a body of church history. Now for their decision: "Patrick was a man excelling in doctrine and miracles, who by his prayers shortly converted all Ireland, founded churches without number, ordaining preachers, delivering the possessed, raising the dead to the number of sixty, and baptising twelve thousand souls." Magdeburg Cent. 5. Col. 818. Cent. 6. p. 407. We may just add for the edification of our readers, that the good centuriators intimate that Patrick did all this for the increase of popery. No harm to them for the insinuation, for popery could not have been a very bad thing, if it enabled Patrick to achieve such wonders. After this no descendant of St. Patrick will be ashamed of his religion.

7. Whilst our separated brethren acknowledge the beauty and purity of the Catholic Church in the early ages, they assert that at an after period she sullied this beauty and purity, and fell into errors and superstitions. But they are sadly perplexed as to the time when, and the place where; and we live in hope, that if they will only go on a little longer disputing and contradicting each other, and throw a little more light on that calumniated period, they will dissipate and dispute away the dark ages altogether. When we ask them when these corruptions found their way into the church, it is amusing to see how puzzled they are.

"It is hard for us to answer at *what time*, neither is it necessary to set down the very instant of time; all things were not overturned at once; the hairs of the head grow not grey at once." Bishop of Durham's Charge, p. 10.

8. Whitaker, Answer to Campion, p. 171, is in the same "fix," as Jonathan would say: "We can neither tell by whom, nor at what time the enemy did sow your doctrine, neither do we know who was the first author of your popish opinions."

9. "We do not hold," says Usher (answer to Malone, p. 1. 9.) that Rome was built in a day, or that the great dunghill of errors we now behold in her was raised in one age. Neither can I precisely lay down the time when she first thought herself wiser than her forefathers." What a figure such witnesses as these would make in a court of justice!

10. We may close our Protestant authorities on this topic with a brief remark from Gibbon's Decline and Fall. He says, "No learned man can resist the force of that historical evidence which establishes the fact, that during the whole period of the first four ages of the church, the *principal points* of doctrine, believed by the papists, were already admitted, both in *theory* and in practice."

A short extract from St. Augustine may very suitably close the rear of all that we have adduced: "Whatsoever the universal church practiseth, if *no time* can be found when the said practice first begun, it must necessarily be judged to have descended from the very Apostles themselves." St. Aug. Lib 4. Contra Donatistas c. 24. Here St. Augustine charitably comes in to extricate these various bewildered Protestant writers from their difficulties, and supplies them with a simple, sound, and satisfactory answer as to who "was the first author of our popish opinions." Why, the apostles to be sure.

SONNET.

Methought, that in a calm and leafy bower
I rested, where the purple flowers were springing,
And from their buds of bloom and beauty flinging,
On loaded gales their odour's richest power:
Watching the evening's warm and sunny shower,
I heard the woods, and plains, and valleys, ringing
With every feather'd denizen's glad singing,
For such a scene, and such a gentle hour.—
O faithless vision! faithless and untrue!
Nor bower, nor bud, nor odour sweet is here,
Nor song of bird—instead of these I view
The City's walls of aspect dark and drear,
And, for the skies of deep ethereal blue,
Long-volumed clouds of murky smoke appear.

THE CELL.

How wildly sweet, by Hartland Tower,
The thrilling voice of prayer!
A seraph, from his cloudy bower,
Might learn to listen there.

For time, and place, and storied days,
To that gray fane have given
Hues that might win an angel's gaze,
'Mid scenery of heaven!

Above, the ocean breezes sweep
With footsteps firm and free;
Around, the mountains guard the deep;
Beneath, the wide, wide sea!

Enter! the arching roofs expand
Like vessels on the shore,
Inverted, when the fisher-band
Might tread their planks no more,

But rear'd on high in that stern form,
Lest faithless hearts forget
The men that braved the ancient storm
And held the early net!

The tracery of a quaint old time
Still weaves the chancel-screen,
And tombs, with many a broken rhyme,
Suit well this simple scene.

A Saxon font, with baptism bright,
The womb of second birth;
An altar, where in angel's sight
Their Lord descends to earth!

Here gildes the spirit of the psalm;
Here breathes the soul of prayer:
The awful church! so hush'd, so calm—
Ah, surely heaven is there!

And lives no legend on the wall?
No theme of former men?
A shape, to rise at Fancy's call,
And sink in graves again?

Yes, there—through yonder portal-stone,
With whispered words they tell,
How once the monk, with name unknown,
Prepared that silent cell!

He came with griefs that shunned the light,
With vows long breathed in vain;
These arches heard, at dead of night,
The lash—the shriek—the pain,—

The prayer that rose and fell in tears—
The sob—the bursting sigh—
Till woke with agony of years
Th' exceeding bitter cry!

This lasted long; as life will wear
Even though in anguish nurst;
Few think what human hearts can bear
Before their sinews burst.

It lasted long, but not for aye;
The hour of freedom came!
In that dim niche the stranger lay,
cold and silent frame.

What sorrow shook the strong man's soul,
What guilt was rankling there,
We know not; Time may not unrol
The page of his despair.

He sleeps in yonder nameless ground;
A cross hath mark'd the stone;
Pray ye his soul in death hath found
The peace to life unknown.

And if ye mourn that man of tears,
Take heed lest ye, too, fall;
A day may mar the rest that years
Shall seek, but not recal!

Nor think that deserts soothe despair,
Or shame in cells is screen'd;
For Thought, the demon, will be there,
And Memory, the fiend!

Then waft, ye winds, this tale of fear,
Breathe it in hall and bower;
Till reckless hearts grow hushed to hear
The Monk of Hartland Tower!

PECULIARITIES OF THE ROBIN.

Few observers of nature can have passed, unheeded, the sweetness and peculiarity of the song of the robin, and its various indications with regard to atmospheric changes: the mellow, liquid notes of spring and summer, the melancholy sweet pipings of Autumn, and the jerking chirps of winter. In spring, when about to change his winter song for the vernal, he warbles, for a short time, in a strain so unusual, as at first to startle and puzzle even those ears most experienced in the notes of birds. He may be considered as part of the naturalist's barometer. On a summer evening, though the weather may be in an unsettled and rainy state, he sometimes takes his stand on the topmost twig, or on the "house top," singing cheerfully and sweetly. When this is observed, it is an unerring promise of succeeding fine days. Sometimes, though the atmosphere is dry and warm, he may be seen melancholy, chirping and brooding in a bush, or low in a hedge: this promises the reverse of his merry lay and exalted station.—*Anecdotes of the Animal Kingdom.*

TRAIT OF MATERNAL LOVE.

A FEMALE suttler of our corps, who had been with us during the whole campaign, returned from Moscow, carrying in a waggon five young children, and all the fruits of her industry. Arrived at the Wop, she regarded with horror the rapid stream, which compelled her to leave on its banks all her little fortune, and the future subsistence of her children. For a long time she ran up and down, eagerly looking for a new passage, then returning in despair from her fruitless search, she said to her husband, "We must, indeed, abandon all; let us now try only to save our children." Saying this, she took the two youngest from the waggon, and placed them in her husband's arms. I saw the poor father closely hug the innocent creatures, and with a trembling foot traverse the river; while his wife, falling on her knees at the edge of the water, now gazed eagerly on him, and then raised her eyes to heaven: but as soon as she saw him safely landed, she lifted her hands in gratitude to Providence, and leaping on her feet, exclaimed with transport, "They are saved, they are saved." The anxious father, depositing his precious burden on the bank, hastened back, seized on two more of them, and again plunging into the waves, being followed by his wife, who bore the fifth on one arm, and with the other hand clung fast to her husband, reached the shore in safety. The children who had been first carried over, thinking themselves abandoned by their parents, made the air resound with their cries; but their tears soon ceased to flow, when the affectionate family was again reunited.—*Campaign in Russia.*

THE CATHOLIC BOY'S SHILLING.

A poor old blind man sat at a corner of the street in a town where it was not a crime to beg, and every time he heard a passer by, he raised his plaintive voice to ask a halfpenny. He had nothing to live on but the alms he received from the charity of the people, and some who had not the means to help him gave him a kind word, and if people would consider the value of kind words, perhaps there would be fewer harsh words spoken.

One beautiful summer morning, a boy about twelve years old passed the corner where the blind beggar sat. He was in great glee, for he had been invited to visit his aunt who lived at a village two miles off, and there was to be a fair at the village, and Charles expected to spend a merry day. Joyfully he ran along the street, when the voice of the blind man arrested him. Charles had a feeling heart, and he looked at the beggar with much compassion. Poor man, thought he, he cannot see the beautiful green meadows covered with daisies, he cannot see the sun and the beautiful blue heavens; alas, it is always night for him. He cannot work, he would die of hunger unless charitable people helped him—how unfortunate that I have nothing to give him; but when I grow big and become rich, I will give large alms to every poor person I see." Such were the reflections of Charles while he gazed on the blind beggar, and with a voice full of emotion he cried, "God bless you, poor man," and went on his way.

The beggar thanked him and blessed him; the kind word from youth falls grateful on the beggar's ear. The tear was in the boy's eye when the beggar's voice was lost in the distance, and he said to himself over and over again, "How I wish I had any thing to give that poor man." But as Charles advanced into the country the impression faded. The green fields, the singing of the birds, the people on their way to the fair, all helped to withdraw his thoughts from poverty and misery, and fix them on the glittering things of earth. He was near the village; he already heard the distant sound of music, when he saw on the ground a piece of money half hidden by the dust; he stooped, and picked up a shilling. How glad he was! "What shall I do with this?" was his first thought; "I shall give it to the poor blind man," was his second. In this case certainly "second thoughts were best," better than third thoughts, as we shall see! "What would hinder me to run back and give it to him?" and so master Charles began to retrace his steps. At first he run, then he walked quick, then he walked slow, and the slow walking gave the third thought leisure to come into his mind, "What nice things I could buy at the fair!"

Pehaps if one of the Fathers of the desert had been there, he would have seen a little Ethiopian perched on the boy's shoulder, and whispering in his ear, "How disagreeable it will be to walk through the fair with nothing in one's pocket to buy any thing one may fancy One cuts but a sorry figure with an empty purse—money makes the mare to go." "The poor blind man has nothing for his dinner," whispered his guardian angel; "you can save some of the cakes you will buy at the fair and give him them in the evening," insinuated the Ethiopian. Charles hesitated—the Ethiopian snapped his fingers and whistled, and Charles heard the sound of drums and fifes coming in the direction of the fair. When we hesitate, the battle is lost.

The fair was going on merrily. Charles ran hither and thither, undecided what to do with his shilling, when a band of strolling children made him run towards them, and to Punch and Judy in all their glory! When a numerous company was assembled, master Punch announced that a party of his friends and relatives, were about to perform a tragic comedy in a neighbouring barn, where also would be exhibited a magic lanthern, in which might be seen kings, emperors, and other great men; besides all the capitals in the world, with the sun, moon, and stars shining on them, and a thousand other fine things which you would have no idea of unless you saw them, and all for the small sum of one shilling.

Crowds were entering. Charles could no longer resist—he gave his shilling, and in half an hour the pleasure was over, and his pocket was empty. Ever and anon the image of the poor blind man seemed to rise before him, turning up his withered features to the Heavens which he could not see, and holding out his hands for help.

Charles's attention was now attracted by his aunt and his little cousin Mary. The latter was standing near a basket of cakes; she had just finished her second and was about to buy a third, when her mother said, "You are not hungry, Mary, and you are going to buy another cake, would it be a great sacrifice for you to give your penny away in charity?" Mary blushed, and said she had not been thinking, or she would not have spent all upon herself, and then asked on whom she should bestow her penny. "Would you give a penny every week out of your pocket-money," asked her mother, "or would you prefer spending it on yourself?" Again Mary blushed. "Dear mamma," said she, "I will give a penny every week, but tell me to whom?" "You must know," said her mother, "there is about to be a branch of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith established here, and a penny a week is all that is asked to assist in converting poor souls, who never heard of Jesus Christ or His blessed mother. There are savages in America, heathens in India, Mahometans who possess the Holy Land where our Saviour lived and died—all need to be converted, and your penny would go to help in this glorious work." "Oh mamma, mamma," cried the little girl, "I will never spend my pennies on cakes again." "Do not promise too much, Mary, in order that you may remain steady to what you do promise," said her judicious mother. "God does not ask you to renounce every thing pleasant, but only to impose some privations on yourself suitable to your age, that you may learn the habit of self-denial, and be

able to practise it better and better as you grow older."

This conversation made a deep impression on Charles. "My aunt will surely give me some money," he thought, "and then the blind beggar shall have his shilling." But his aunt gave him nothing but two or three of the nice books published at Derby, and the blind beggar could not read, and Charles went home with rather a load on his conscience. Before going to bed, he as usual knelt to pray before his crucifix. "Ah my Saviour," said the boy, "thou hast died and suffered for me, and I have done nothing for thee this day; pardon me sweet Saviour, and I promise to do better for the time to come." Then turning towards a picture of the blessed Virgin he continued, "My mother Mary, thou hearest the resolutions and promises of thy poor weak child; help me, my mother, to keep them, for without thy help I shall surely fail; intercede for me, sweet mother, that I may be made worthy of the promises of Christ." With a lightened conscience Charles fell asleep; his prayer was heard, for he carefully gathered up his money, and on the morning of the Assumption, he ran to the corner of the street, found the blind beggar, led him to church to hear Mass, and put five shillings into his hand, in honour of the great feast of his mother Mary, and because he had learned to see his Saviour Jesus Christ in the person of the poor. M. L.

DEATH OF QUEEN ELIZABETH.

THE following is the account which one of her attendants, who was present, has left us of her death.

[This paper is entitled in the original, "A True Relation of what succeeded in the sickness and death of Queen Elizabeth," and is endorsed by Father Persons with the following words:—"The Relation of the Lady Southwell of late Q. death, po. Aprilis, 1607." It is in the Stonyhurst collection, MSS. Aug. s. iii. 77. The person called "Lady" Southwell, was one of Elizabeth's maids of honour.—T.]

"Her majesty being in very good health, one day Sir John Stanhope, being the vice-chamberlain, and secretary Cecil's dependant and familiar, came and presented her majesty with a piece of gold of the bigness of an angel, full of characters, which, he said, an old woman in Wales bequeathed her on her death-bed; and thereupon he discoursed how the said old woman, by virtue of the same, lived to the age of one hundred and twenty years; and in that age, having all her body withered and consumed, and wanting nature to nourish, she died, commanding the said piece of gold to be carefully sent to her majesty; alleging farther, that as long as the said old woman wore it upon her body she could not die. The Queen, upon the confidence she had hereof, took the said gold, and wore it about her neck. Now, though she fell not suddenly sick, yet daily decreased of her rest and feeding; and, within fifteen days, fell downright sick; and the cause being wondered at by my Lady Scrope, with whom she was very private and confidant, being her near kinswoman, her majesty told her (commanding her to conceal the same) that she saw, one night in her bed, her body exceeding lean and fearful, in a light of fire; [This sight was at Whitehall, a little before she departed thence to Richmond, and may be testified by another lady, who was one of the nearest about her person, of whom the Queen demanded whether she was not wont to see sights in the night, telling her of the bright flame she had seen.*] Afterward, in the melancholy of her sickness, she desired to see a true looking-glass, which in twenty years before she had not seen, but only such a one which of purpose was made to deceive her sight: which glass being brought her, she fell presently, exclaiming at all those which had so much commended her, and took it so offensively, that all those which had before flattered her, durst not come in her sight. Now falling into extremity, she sat two days and three nights upon her stool, ready dressed, and could never be brought by any of her council to go to bed, or eat, or drink: only my lord admiral one time persuaded her to drink some broth. For any of the rest, she would not answer them to any question; but said softly to my lord admiral's earnest persuasions, that if he knew what she had seen in her bed, he would not persuade her as he did; and secretary Cecil, overhearing her, asked if her majesty had seen any spirits; to which she said she scorned to answer him to so idle a question. Then he told her how, to content the people, her majesty must go to bed: to which she smiled, wonderfully contemning him, saying that the word *must* was not to be used to princes; and thereupon said, 'Little man, little man, if your father had lived, ye durst not have said so much: but thou knowest I must die, and that maketh thee so presumptuous,' and presently commanding him and the rest to depart her chamber, (she) willed my lord admiral to stay; to whom she shook her head, and with a pitiful voice said, 'My lord, I am tied with a chain of iron about my neck.' He alleging her wonted courage to her, she replied, 'I am tied, and the case is altered with me.' Then two ladies, waiting on her in her chamber, discovered in the bottom of her chair the queen of hearts, with a nail of iron knocked through the forehead of it; the which the ladies durst not pull out, remembering that the like thing was used to the old lady of Sussex, and proved afterwards for a witchcraft, for the which certain were hanged, as instruments of the same. The lady Elizabeth Guilford, then waiting on the queen, and leaving her asleep in her privy chamber, met her, as she thought, three or four chambers off, and fearing she would have been displeased that she left her alone, came towards her to excuse herself; and she vanished away; and when she returned into the same chamber where she had left her, found her asleep as before. So growing past recovery, having kept her bed fifteen days, besides three days she sat upon her stool, and one day, when being pulled up by force, she stood on her feet fifteen hours, the council sent to her the bishop of Canterbury and other of the prelates, upon sight of whom she was much offended, cholerically rating them, bidding them be packing, saying she was no atheist, but knew full well that they were hedge-priests, and took it for an indignity that they should speak to her. Now being given over by all, and at the last gasp keeping still her senses in everything, and giving ever, when she spoke, apt answers, (though she spoke very seldom, having then a sore throat), she desired to wash it, that she might answer more freely to what the council demanded; which was, to know whom she would have king; but they, seeing her throat troubled her so much, desired her to hold up her finger when they named whom liked her. Whereupon they named the king of France—the king of Scotland—at which she never stirred. They named my lord Beauchamp, whereto she said, 'I will have no rascal's son in my seat, but one worthy to be a king.' Hereupon instantly she died. Then the council went forth, and reported she meant the king of Scots: whereupon they went to London to proclaim him, leaving her body with charge not to be opened, such being her desire: but Cecil having given a secret warrant to the surgeons, they opened her; which the rest of the council afterwards passed over, though they meant it not so. Now her body being sewed up, was brought to Whitehall, where being watched every night by six several ladies, myself that night there watching as one of them, being all about the body, which was fast nailed up in a board coffin with leaves of lead covered with velvet, her body and head brake with such a crack, that (it) splitted the wood, lead, and even cloth: whereupon, the next day, she was fain to be new trimmed up; whereupon they gave their verdicts, that, if she had not been opened, the breach of her body would have been much worse; but no man durst speak it publicly, for fear of displeasing secretary Cecil. Her majesty understood that secretary Cecil had given forth to the people that she was mad: and, therefore, in her sickness did many times say to him, 'Cecil, know that I am not mad: you must not think to make queen Jane of me.' And although many reports, by Cecil's means, were spread, how she was distracted, myself nor any that were about her could ever perceive her speeches, so well applied, proceeded from a distracted mind." Mar. 24, 1603.

*The passage here inserted between brackets, is not in the MSS. which I have used; but is found in another copy seen by Persons. Discussion of Barlowe's Answer, 218.—T.

BOTANY.

Of all the animate and inanimate productions of nature, flowers have the least reason to complain of the neglect or unkindness of man; and Æsop, Gay, and La Fontaine in conjunction, would find it difficult to discover a grievance for them which they could lay, with any justice, at the foot of Jove's imperial throne. In every age and every nation they have been honoured and cherished, loved and admired. In the olden time they graced the festivals, and adorned the altars, of the deities. A goddess, ever blooming and young, superintended their interests, and her marriage with the gentle Zephyrus must have singularly promoted the welfare of her delicate subjects. They have been showered on the heads of heroes, been twisted into the chaplets of Hymen, and chosen by Love as his most appropriate gifts, and most intelligible symbols. Affection has delighted to strew them on the graves of the departed, and poetry has sung their praise till the wearied ear turns from the oft-told tale.

Who will assert that in modern days flowers are less honourably distinguished?—who that has seen the Epargne laden with their mingled blossoms; the most dainty dishes garnished with their brilliant tints; or the splendid drawing-rooms and gay boudoirs, where they grow in tubs, or float in vases, or stiffen in saucers filled with moistened sand—who, above all, that has beheld them in bunches, bushes, and arborets mingling with the tresses, towering high above the heads, or, as in recent times, hanging confusedly about the throats of our most fashionable females?—"Flowers of all hues, and *without thorn* the rose."

With how much care, too, do we tend "the firstlings of the year," and endeavour to persuade them to expand their bright petals, and breathe their delicious scents a little earlier than the laws of nature permit. In the language of that exquisite poem, "The Flower and the Leaf," the choicest offering which Flora's altars ever received:

> "When buds, that yet the blast of Eurus fear,
> Stand at the door of life, and doubt to clothe the year,"

we tempt them forth, and promise them our fostering protection. "Then, at our call emboldened," the hyacinth, the narcissus, and the crocus burst their sheaths; we delight to deck our rooms with these children of early spring—we display them exultingly at our windows, and, "Qui possit violas addere dives erit."

Faint, however, are the pleasures which flowers afford in cities, when compared with those which they bestow upon their admirers in the country. There, the florist rears them near his home, watches them, improves them by culture, takes a parental interest in their progress, and a lover's pride in their charms, while health and cheerfulness reward his labours. There, the botanist explores the hedges, and traverses the hills in pursuit of some new addition to his herbal or his knowledge, and the barren heath and dull common acquire interest and beauty in his eyes.

> "Oh! friendly to the best pursuits of man,
> Friendly to thought, to virtue, and to peace,"

are tastes and studies of this description, when cultivated as the amusement, not the business of life, and kept in due subserviency to higher and more useful pursuits.

Botany appears to be peculiarly adapted to the study of ladies, as it tempts them to the enjoyment of air and exercise, which, though the best friends to health and beauty, the most effectual remedies for nervousness and ennui, are yet very generally neglected by the flowers of the human race. It is a science, too, within the range of female acquirement, and is repugnant to neither humanity nor elegance. Entomology is cruel; mineralogy and geology difficult and laborious; conchology expensive; but botany is both cheap and easy, healthful and innocent, open to the pursuit of all, and requiring only so much study and attention as may awaken interest, and occupy without wearying the mind. It is favourable, also, to the acquisition of habits of inquiry and observation, and sends the eye constantly abroad on expeditions of discovery. It is not a botanist "who can travel from Dan to Beersheba, and cry, all is barren;" on the contrary, wherever a blade of grass appears, he is on the watch for rarity or beauty, and seldom returns from a ramble without some novelty to relate, some treasure to display.

There are minds which adorn and enrich all they touch, which can learn wisdom from a flower, piety from a blade of grass, can find "sermons in stones, and good in every thing." The man thus happily gifted, walks forth into the fields—the daisy, "wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower," the eye-bright, with its painted blossom, the golden tormentil, or the blue hare-bell spangles the turf on which he treads; while the hedges are covered with the clusterings of the wild rose, the garlands of the convolvulus and honey-suckle, or starred with the English geranium, the bright hypericum, or the fairy scorpion-grass. Astonished by the profusion of beauty, the wantonness of ornament which meet him wherever he turns his eyes, he asks their use and design, his heart rises in wonder and praise to the throne of the Great Creator, and—he is answered.

On minuter inspection, how much of amusement and instruction may be derived from the study of flowers, that study in which Israel's wisest monarch delighted, he who "spoke of trees from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop on the wall." The daisy, insignificant as it apparently is (yet immortalised by the pen of Dryden, and graced by the song of Burns), becomes, on closer observation, an expanse of wonders, a cluster of miracles. Scores of minute blossoms compose its disc and border, each distinct, each useful, each delicately beautiful. The convolvulus and honey-suckle appear to the careless eye to twist in a similar round every thing in their neighbourhood; but the botanist discovers that they are governed by different laws, the former always twining itself according to the apparent motion of the sun, the latter in a contrary direction; and when busy man attempts to alter this arrangement, he invariably injures, and perhaps destroys the plant.

The heath, so common in the northern parts of this kingdom, valuable to the poor as a substitute for more expensive fuel, and to the sportsman as a cover for grouse, affords to the botanist a striking instance of the care extended by Providence towards his creatures. Its seed is the food of numerous birds, in regions where other sustenance is scarce, and the vessels which contain it are so constructed as to retain their contents for a considerable length of time, instead of discharging them when they become ripe. Indeed, the more we study, the closer we observe the operations and provisions of nature, the greater will be our wonder, the higher our admiration. Every separate plant has doubtless its own history, its distinct uses, its peculiar inhabitants; and, like St. Pierre's strawberry, may furnish a study too diffuse, too deep, for the life of an individual.

The physiology of vegetables is a most curious and entertaining branch of the science of botany; and, owing to the great improvement of our microscopes, may be pursued to an extent far beyond the most sanguine hopes of former students. In some recent experiments, the growth of wheat was actually rendered visible to the eye; a bubble of gas was seen to dart forth, carrying with it a portion of vegetable matter, which instantaneously formed into a fine tube, and one fibre was completed. In short, with instruments like our's, what may we not hope to accomplish in studies, unexhausted and inexhausti-

ble as are those of nature. History, biography, geography, may no longer furnish scope for novelty; even fancy's wide domain may be filled to repletion; but the botanist, the chemist, and the geologist, have employment before them for centuries to come, and long, indeed, will it be ere they can have cause "to weep for new worlds to conquer."

For those whose travels do not extend beyond lands, where Withering can guide them, there is space enough for study, discovery, and delight; but he who visits other climates, or is enabled by opportunity and wealth to rear their productions on British ground, has of course a wider field for research and admiration. We do not know a more delicious and enchanting spot than a green-house, filled with the blossoms and the perfumes of "the lands of the sun." The warm air conveys the choice and exquisite odours to the scent, the sight is ravished by the tastefully mingled tints and noble foliage of the *aristocracy* of plants; and a luxurious sensation of languor and enjoyment steals gradually over the frame. Here, too, double flowers, which the strict botanist terms *monsters*, but in which the florist takes peculiar pride, are displayed; and man is permitted by Providence to amuse himself by diversifying and embellishing nature, while the springs of life and vegetation are kept mysterious and inaccessible.

Our Saviour's words, "Consider the lilies of the fields how they grow," acquire additional force and peculiar beauty, when we remember that they were suggested by the sight of the splendid amaryllis lutea, a species of lily which abounds in the land of Palestine. Who does not feel their emphasis, when he imagines our blessed Lord standing on the mount, from whence his divine sermon was delivered, surrounded by an attentive and wondering throng, whom he is urging to lay aside unnecessary cares, and trust in the bounty of their heavenly Father; and then sees him pointing towards those glorious lilies which decked the surrounding plain, and deducing from their beauty, exceeding the pomp of kings' attire, lessons of simplicity in dress, freedom from vain or excessive cares, and dependance on Almighty protection.

The study of Botany has afforded illustration to another passage in holy writ. In 2 Kings, vi. 26, we read that, during a severe famine, in Samaria, "a cab of dove's dung" was sold for twenty pieces of silver. What this article of food might be, had long puzzled the commentators, when the father of botany suggested that it was probably the root of the ornithogalum or Bethlehem star, which affords to this day a pleasant and nutritious aliment to the lower orders in Judea. Its English name was given on account of its prevalence in Palestine, and its ancient one, "ornithogalum," literally signifies bird's milk. When to this we add that its blossoms, of a greenish white, resemble at a little distance the dung of birds, the conjecture of Linnæus becomes still more probable, and a curious elucidation appears to be afforded of an obscure passage of Scripture.

Enough has been said to establish the claim of botany to the favour of the elegant and the wise, as a pursuit both healthful and innocent, profitable and pleasant. Linnæus, to whom every botanist must say, as Dante said to Virgil, "Tu duca, tu Signor, e tu Maestro," is intelligible in his original garb to but few ladies; but there are many excellent works in our own language which will lead them farther than the generality will choose to follow.

Eve, as described by the hand of Milton, "walked forth among her fruit and flowers, to visit how they prospered;" and we cannot imagine an employment better adapted to Paradise, or recommend a more graceful and pleasing occupation to Eve's fair daughters.

The good and sagacious Owen Feltham has said, that "to have a mind which delights in innocent employment, is daily rising to content and blessedness." Those, therefore, who have opened to us new sources of rational amusement, and like Linnæus, Ray, Tournefort, and Withering, have been our pioneers on the road of science, deserve our grateful acknowledgments and affectionate remembrance. In the absence of more valuable gifts, let us pay them with appropriate offerings:—

——"Manibus date lilia plenis,
Purpureos spargam flores."

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

Oh, be not ashamed of the holy sign
Of thy soul's salvation sure,
But own thy belief in a love divine
And reproach for the cross endure.

The sign of the cross let thy breast receive
On every returning morn,
Entreat that thy Lord rich graces may give,
His follower's life to adorn.

Art thou in grief, and the murmuring thought
Rebelliously shadows thy heart,
Make the sign of the cross, 'twill mind thee who bought
Thy soul by a bitterer smart.

Lov'd friends of the faith, have ye sorrow'd with me
On the oft barren state of the mind,
Not a heavenward thought, and when bending the knee
The tongue can no utterance find.

Then is it not sweet to show faith, hope, and love,
By so simple, yet holy a sign,
And to feel that a merciful Saviour above
On the act will cause favour to shine.

Oh, yes! for it is the intention that he
Will own in an action so small,
Condescending, our Lord in his dread majesty,
As when humbled on earth for us all.

The sign of the cross, 'tis sanctified sure,
By members now happy above,
The last act of the martyrs when called to endure
A torturous death for their love.

Blessed symbol of faith! Oh, tower thou high!
Fitting crown to each temple of God!
A beacon declaring to all that pass by,
Within is the Saviour adored.

The sign of the cross, sweet signet of trust,
Which my infantine brow imprest,
All the honour I crave for my sleeping dust,
Is to find neath thy shadow its rest.

And should it, bright thought, to glory arise,
Love and praise shall each power employ;
And I'll sing of the cross above the skies,
The cause of eternity's joy.

Mary.

The steady man maintains and executes with vigour what he thinks true and conformable to his duty, after having maturely weighed the reasons for and against. The headstrong man examines nothing; his opinion is his law.

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